1: Herskovits E-4,5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

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While farming and marketing are by far the most widespread occupations, it must not be concluded that all specialization of economic function is lacking. The list of those in the *arrondissement* of Mirebalais who in 1934 paid license fees gives a comprehensive picture of the varied nature of their occupations:

2 justices of the peace
2 notaries
5 "pleaders" before the courts
1 doctor
6 surveyors
4 woodworkers
48 carpenters
12 sawyers
40 masons
14 tailors
3 dressmakers
4 shoemakers
2 mattress-makers
2 ironworkers who repair the caldrons for boiling sugar
15 bakers
21 butchers
23 distillers
4 millers
1 hairdresser
4 jewelers
2 general storekeepers
43 venders of notions in the market place
16 peddlers

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Sex division of labor cuts across these categories. Thus the baking of bread is in the hands of women, some of whom operate ovens of considerable capacity, and women are dressmakers and laundresses. Candles are made of beeswax by old women, but the cotton that is used for the wicks, or for hammocks or fish-nets or cinches of saddles, is spun by both elderly men and women. In the main, however, the rule is that manual labor outside the house is in the hands of men, while women are the housekeepers and tradespeople. Farming has been mentioned as an occupation primarily for men. All woodworking is done by men, who make furniture and fashion the dugout canoes used on the Haitian rivers; men also do basketry and weave straw hats; leather-working is in their hands as well, and they make shoes and saddles. No pottery is

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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manufactured in the valley of Mirebalais, but elsewhere in Haiti men are the potters. The African knowledge of iron-working has been lost, but there are those who repair iron implements and the great pots used in making sugar, and those who work in tin. Some men specialize in making rope, others in building the mills which crush the sugar-cane. Not everyone knows how to make *clairin*, the strong drink of the peasants, and some do nothing except distill this. Painters are found who paint the larger houses built in the town, as well as those occasionally erected by the more prosperous peasants in the countryside. The calling of the mason is a well-established one. These craftsmen build the walls of the more pretentious stone houses, but more particularly find their time taken up in the erection of tombs.

With economic specialization goes a stratification of Haitian society, roughly drawn, but based on prestige and the command of economic resources, in which the following classes are informally recognized: [9] There are the *pauvres*, indigent folk, who for some reason have forfeited or otherwise lost their family connections and whatever they may have owned and now must actually beg to obtain enough to eat. One finds but few of these except in the larger centers; in Mirebalais they number not more than five or six. One such is an elderly man who originally came from another part of the island, lost what he owned, and when he became deaf was no longer able to earn a living. He was occasionally set at some menial task such as carrying water or gathering firewood. In another category are those known as *malheureux* — folk who are usually, though not always, incompetent, but who are generally regarded as unlucky. They may work hard on their land, but their crops fail or yield meagerly; they may obtain a *job*, but something goes wrong with it — the work is temporary, or they cannot collect the wages due them, or illness follows every period of employment.[10]

The second group comprises the middle class. This class

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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to cutting fruit, though seen in Africa, was probably introduced there by the early traders, and all machetes found today in Haiti are imported from Europe or America. The same is true of the hoe, for the short-handled, broad-bladed West African hoe has given way to the European long-handled type, though the blade of the Haitian hoe is somewhat broader than that used in America and Europe. Despite the presence of domesticated animals to draw the plow, this implement has never gained favor in Haiti, nor have recent efforts to teach the Haitian peasant the use of the plow achieved any degree of success. He prefers his African mode of cultivation, to say which implies more than just the employment of a certain implement, since even such matters as the manner in which he employs his hands and feet in the process of planting are included. When the Dahomean plants, for example, he holds a calabash of seed under his left arm, from which he takes the grains with his right hand. As he moves down the rows of newly turned earth, he makes a depression with the heel of his right foot, drops a few grains into this depression and, replacing the earth with his toes, takes a step so that he can repeat the process with his left foot. This is exactly the manner in which Haitians were observed planting in the valley of Mirebalais.[8] Unlike the usage in Africa, however — where the men clear the ground, the men and women plant, and the women tend the growing crops — the European pattern, which places agriculture in all its essential phases in the hands of men, has been taken over almost in its entirety.

The women have retained almost without change the African modes of preparing food. Grain is first pounded in an African-like mortar, with an aboriginal type of pestle, while the shelled kernels are winnowed in a large round basketry tray. The cooking is either done on a raised mud platform in the cooking shelter, as in West Africa, or on three stones, employed as rests for the pots, a method equally characteristic of Africa. In the Haitian cuisine the prevalence of stews, of

Like their ancestors in preslavery days, the Haitians had a clear-cut and equitable division of labor between the sexes which was particularly suited to the agrarian life. The pattern of work sharing seems to have been misunderstood by nineteenth-century chroniclers, many of whom complained that the Haitian male napped in the shade while the women performed all the labor. It is quite true that the Haitian peasant woman is a relentless toiler. It may even be, as Sir Harry Johnston declared early in the twentieth century, that "the women are the best part of the Haitian nation." This Englishman wrote glowingly of the Haitian woman's fortitude and energy:

> In the face of all discouragements, with which a bad government clouds their existence the women of Haiti . . . continue to toil, to raise poultry and cattle, till the fields, see to their gardens, make pottery and mats. They cannot stop to reason, but must go on working from three years old to the end of their lives. Such industry (which is almost equally supplemented by that of the peasant husbands) protected should make Haiti one of the richest countries in the world for its size and population.[1]

But as Johnston surmised, the Haitian man, too, treads an unstopping wheel. Although it is the women who are seen crowding the trails and roads on market days, behind the produce they vend is the work of the men. For it is primarily the men who break the ground and plant, cultivate, and harvest the crops. It is the men who cut timber and build the houses, who dig and process lime for plastering the walls, and who thatch the roofs. And the houses do not last forever but must be rebuilt time and again. It is the men who cut and transport wood for fuel, dig red clay from the clay beds for pottery, make the mortars in which the grain is pulverized, build terraces for the gardens, make charcoal, go to sea for fish, and work at the village forge. On the plantations they cut the cane and the sisal. In the city they carry the heavy coffee and sugar bags, load the ships, make bricks, and build roads.

The women, for their part, run the household, care for the children, carry water from the springs, launder at the river's edge, cook, sew, play a supporting role in the field work, carry the crops to market, sell them, and bring back things which the garden does not produce. The woman may be the business manager of the household, and sometimes from the proceeds of special projects she may be able to put aside small savings of her own.

Children slip into their work roles at an early age. Boys and girls as young as three or four may be seen carrying small tins of water on their heads, on their way from the springs, usually in groups with older girls or women. Young girls assume woman's work as soon as they can

[1] [Johnston, The Negro in The New World. Cf P. 352, Category 116. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

in construction but stands a little shorter. Two Pétro drums of slightly different sizes and tones, called *baka* and *ti baka*, in combination with one or more rattles, an iron percussion device, and sometimes an assot, make up an orchestra.

The *assot* is a small board which is beaten with sticks. Often these sticks are flat, and sometimes a small wooden bench is substituted for the board.

Dances for which the Congo or Pétro drums are used include Pétro, Kitta, Bumba, Salongo, Bambarra, Moundongue, Congo Loangue, Pastorel, Mousondi, and Moutchétché. The drum for the Congo Loangue dance formerly was somewhat taller and narrower than the present Pétro drum, but the distinction is no longer maintained.

The Juba, or Martinique, drum is similar to the Pétro or Congo but wider and squatter. It is laid on its side for playing, the drummer sitting astride and pressing his heel against the drumhead to mute it or change the pitch. For Juba or related music, a second man, called the *catalier* (the one who *cata*), beats sticks against the body of the instrument behind the drummer.

In the northern part of Haiti one also finds the Zesse drum, used exclusively for the Zesse dance. It is cylindrical, about thirty inches high, and is played in an upright position. A wire is stretched across the goatskin head in the manner of a snare drum. Like all drums with goatskin heads, it is beaten with the naked hands.

A large two-headed drum called the *tymbale* is used as a work drum for labor societies and for processions, and in combination with other drums it sometimes appears in the Juba and secular Congo dances. The heads are mounted on hoops, which are held fast by lacing. The drum is carried by a rope slung over the shoulder or around the neck. Sometimes an assot striking board is affixed to the body of the drum.

A miniature copy of the tymbale is called a *tambourine*. It is used in carnival dances, notably the Mascaron. Carried by a cord which hangs around the neck, it is played with two diminutive sticks. Drumming is primarily a man's prerogative, but during carnival days women or girls may be seen playing the *tambourine*.

In southwestern Haiti, and possibly elsewhere, special drums are used for the Manuba dance. The Manuba drum is about a foot long, cylindrical, and about five inches in diameter, with two drumheads held together with cords. A pair of these drums is joined by a rope about two feet long, which is hung around the neck so that the two drums are in convenient playing position on the chest.

Twin drums which are hung over the knee are known as *marassas*—The Haitian word for "twins."

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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311 bean country, and perhaps fewer than in any country in Latin Amer-
423 ica. The agriculture itself, with the exceptions now of those very few
171 large-scale plantations in sisal and sugarcane, is adapted to small plots and is worked with intensive labor and few tools on hilly land. Com-
433 pared with agricultural production, especially of cash crops, in most
178 mainland Latin American countries, productivity is low. The yeomanry is conservative in its agricultural practices, and not ready to change unless the changes entail minimal risk and the gains to be real-
241 ized are clearly demonstrable (Erasmus, 1952:20–26). Yeomen culti-
177 vate with three goals in mind: cash income from world-market
185 commodities (for instance, coffee, sisal, vetiver); cash income from
434 items produced for local sale and consumption; and subsistence. While they are heavily involved in production for sale, their crop choices and land-use patterns rest fundamentally on a subsistence orientation. All grow a substantial part of their own food, especially sorghum, maize, sweet potatoes, taro, manioc, malanga (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium* Schott), plantains and bananas, fruits and vegetables, and
423 rice where possible. The land is invested with considerable affect:
823 gods live in it; it is the ultimate security against privation; family
471 members are buried in it; food and wealth come from it; and it is good in itself, even if not cultivated. While such attitudes are common in yeoman societies, Haiti's history of slavery, and of access to land through revolution, has given a special symbolic significance to landowning. Land is valued above all else and is sometimes held "uneconomically"—that is, even when the capital and labor power to work it are lacking.

114 Leyburn describes better than any other writer the history of land
175 acquisition by the yeoman after 1804. The French plantations lay in
483 ruins, never to recover, while early authoritarian attempts to restore the prerevolutionary economy under native Haitian leadership soon failed. In the course of a century, the Haitian people laid claim to their own soil, while population growth and the adoption of the French tradition of equal inheritance progressively reduced the average size of holdings. In spite of some plantation development after the United States occupation, most agricultural land in Haiti is still employed in small holdings, and "land reform" in the conventional sense—the breaking-up of large estates and the creation of a class of small land-
462 holders—is nearly irrelevant to Haiti's needs.
443 As today's yeomanry cultivates, so its womenfolk market. Nearly

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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three hundred marketplaces serve the towns and countryside, some of them patronized by thousands of buyers and sellers on market days. By participating in active small-scale trade, the wives of the yeomen contribute in a limited way to national economic efficiency and growth. As in all heavily agrarian economies marked by poor storage facilities, inferior transportation, and low consumer incomes there is considerable substitution of labor for capital, and there are high losses through spoilage. Except for the marketing of export commodities, much time is consumed in bargaining, in carrying, and in hand-processing of various sorts. But these activities are the accompaniments of the general low level of development of the Haitian economy, not one of its causes.

The economic challenges posed by agriculture on the one hand, and by marketing on the other, differ significantly. Since these activities are carried out predominantly along the lines of a sexual division of labor, the Haitian countrymen and their marketing wives differ in some regards in their attitudes. Foreign observers of the nineteenth century commented regularly on the industry and energy of Haitian rural women, stressing their predominance in trade. Some writers have attributed this convention to the West African tradition, since women are the marketers, men the farmers, in many African societies. Leyburn, however, notes that the militarism and political unrest that have marked Haiti during so much of its history were serious impediments to peaceful trade. Women came to predominate in marketing, he theorizes, because men did what they could to avoid the towns, since they were often impressed into roving army bands if they traveled far from home. Whatever the historical causes may be, it has been established that the women of Haiti's countryside carry on most of the internal trade, while their husbands do most of the farming. These women, on the whole, know more about the towns, mix more easily with outsiders, and show more intrepidity in trade than the men show in agriculture. Yet it has been demonstrated that, for most of them, the scale of their enterprise is so modest and the economic opportunities open to them so restricted that their energy and daring can do little to increase the level of productive activity (Mintz, 1964:256–86).

Haiti's lack of large factories, mechanized production, and a skilled industrial labor force means that the country is unindustrialized by any usual measure.

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581 suspicion of legal complications is well founded: the priests therefore
794 try to concentrate their attack upon the remaining motives. Thus one priest issued a notice at a certain mountain chapel that he would perform no weddings there for persons who wore shoes; an increase in weddings followed. By such devices, and by constant sermons on the significance of the sacrament, he has persuaded many of his parishioners to be married, yet the vast majority of them continue in plaçage.[4]

581 Informally entered unions among the peasants, then, rest upon a sound, practical, economic basis. If the priests are ever to be successful in their campaign for more weddings, Haitian peasant economy must undergo a change; even then the plurality of women (if indeed it exists), now more or less absorbed by plaçage, will work against the reform.

562 It is confusing to speak of "status" in connection with the domestic
565 life of hard-working people, for status implies law, and law hardly touches peasant life. Custom governs all—inevitably, since the majority of peasant women have not been legally married, and since no peasant would willingly take a case to law. Yet women have a definite status as compared with men.

In almost every detail a peasant woman's life differs from that of élite women. The rule of life in country districts is unremitting labor
462 for the female from childhood up. She cooks and makes clothes,
565 labors in the fields after the men have cleared them, does the family
443 washing in the nearest stream, carries water, does whatever housework is required. Practically every Haitian peasant woman has her experience of going to market to sell the vegetables, trinkets, or
[484] other wares her family may produce, and to buy necessities. This trip to market may be short, or as long as twenty miles. One of the characteristic sights of Haiti is the seemingly endless procession of women coming down from the hills trudging, or rather swinging majestically along, with a great load on the head, or riding on the haunches of a tiny donkey loaded with bulging panniers. Arrived at

4. As a result of his campaign for more weddings he has had some unusual experiences. Once, in the midst of the wedding ceremony, a bride rushed out of the chapel and shortly gave birth to a child; when she was able to move again, the ceremony was resumed. Again, traveling into the mountains to perform a similar ceremony, he found a crowd assembled under a tree, assisting at another birth of an infant to a bride-to-be. Sometimes he encounters the argument by a peasant that he will not consent to a wedding until his spouse has proved her fecundity by bearing a certain number of children.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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the market, the women sit all day in the broiling sun, and in Port-au-Prince at least, sometimes sleep near by for the night, in order to complete their purchases and sales and to get their fill of companionable gossip. They are often accompanied by the youngest of their children, some of whom have to be carried.

Some observers profess to see evidences of a matriarchate among the peasants, for as a general rule the woman attends to the business dealings of the market place, handles the money, directs her children, and manages the household. If the man has more than one placée spouse, complete control of the farm is the woman's during the absence of her man. It is a superficial judgment, however, to speak of the peasant mother as a matriarch. The man owns the land, chooses his women, calls for help at the moment he pleases for preparation of the ground for planting; and when he knows his end to be near, summons all his families and disposes of his property as he sees fit. His decision is final. But he is no more a patriarch than his woman is a matriarch: they are economic partners in a struggle for existence.

By our standards, the woman is inferior to the man not only in rights but in being one spouse of several. He may contract several unions, while she may have only one. She does more steady, if not more actual, physical labor than the man. When he is at home, she must offer him the best of the food. As usual in simple societies, however, the issue rarely arises as to superiority or inferiority of the sexes. Customary behavior is followed without much question.

There is one great contrast between élite and peasant women, in the matter of childbirth. The élite mother takes as much care of herself during pregnancy and parturition as would an American woman in well-to-do circles. The peasant mother, on the contrary, cannot allow herself the luxury of medical attention, nor can she spare the time to rest quietly. Like many so-called "primitive" women, she apparently finds herself little incommoded either by pregnancy or birth. Babies are born frequently in the market place, the mother having come down from the hills only that day with her goods. It is not unusual to hear of the birth of a child in a roadside ditch or in a grove by the path to and from the market town. The care given mother and infant is primitive: the navel cord is cut with a sharp stone or a piece of broken glass; a short rest is thought sufficient before the mother resumes her task. As might be expected, the death rate from infection is high and women age prematurely.

Parents are generally kind to their children, so far as physical

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remains is the verbal handing down of recollections, one of the most natural things in the world and one congenial to Haitian peasants. Every region, every village, has its accomplished storytellers. The phenomenal resemblances in detail of the coumbite to Dahomean coöperative work may be due therefore to this verbal tradition.

Once the men have cleared and prepared the field, the care of the crop devolves upon the women. For this there has been a long background of tradition. In African agricultural regions, in the plantations of Saint-Domingue during slave days, under the forced labor régimes of Toussaint and his successors, women had been field workers. They had never known anything else. We have seen that many of the present-day practices of Haiti go back to the times of Pétion and Boyer: during this period women did field work, not by decree of government but by force of circumstance. Their men were constantly taken away from the farms for service in the large army; if crops were to be raised, women must do the work. Sometimes soldiers were stationed near their own homes, and could help in production; but they could be called on to march, at short notice and in peacetime, anywhere in the country. Many of the later presidents made it a definite policy frequently to change the station of regiments, so as to prevent revolutionary projects and guard against the soldiers' being tampered with by the disaffected in any single community.

Sir Harry Johnston records his observations on the Haiti of 1910 as follows:

> The women are the best part of the nation. They are splendid, unremitting toilers. In the face of all discouragements with which a bad Government clouds their existence the women of Haiti remind one of certain patient types of ant or termite, who, as fast as you destroy their labour of months or days, hasten to repair it with unslackening energy. The market-women that descend from the country farms to the Haitian towns know that on their way to the market-place, and in that market-place, they will be robbed by soldiers and officers until the margin of profit on the sale of their wares has practically disappeared. Yet they continue to toil, to raise poultry and cattle, till the fields, see to their gardens, make pottery and mats. They cannot stop to reason, but must go on working from three years old to the end of their lives. Such industry (which is almost equally supplemented by that of the peasant husbands) protected should make Haiti one of the richest countries in the world for its size and population; but so long

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as it is cursed by the present military despotism, the utmost that the women of Haiti can do is to keep their country just above the waters of bankruptcy and their households from complete despair.[9]

Since 1910 the military has been reformed, and the women are not mulcted by soldiers and officers; Sir Harry's prophecy regarding the material benefits of removing the curse of military despotism was overly optimistic.

Rounding out the economic life of the peasant is the market, which provides an outlet for whatever surplus is produced, a source of needed supplies and a modicum of money, as well as an almost imperative diversion for hard-working women. The origin of Haitian markets may have been either French or West African, for both regions had them. They were certainly in existence by 1803 in Saint-Domingue, for Madiou speaks of the trade of the plainsmen of the Cul-de-Sac with the holders of what then was called Port Républicain (now Port-au-Prince), adding: "Each Sunday at Croix-des-Bouquets a market was held which brought together more than 4,000 cultivators, male and female, with the permission of the overseers or proprietors."[10] That so large a number came to the market is an indication of the social as well as the economic nature of this institution. Similarly, in the North in 1803, "Rochambeau, now master at the Cape, set about attending to the market established at Petit-Anse in July. After having suppressed all the markets which existed around the Cape, he opened a single and general one, 13th August, at Petit-Anse, one league from the city." The French general was making use of a familiar economic device to carry forward the economic life of the colony during the trying period of the wars.

In independent Haiti it was an almost immediate development that the women generally should do the marketing, the men being either required to work on the land or busy at military duty. It came to be accepted quite simply that going to market was a woman's work. From 1843 on through most of the century there was an additional reason why peasant men would not go to the market towns: recruits were needed, both for the army and whatever revolutionary coup might be brewing; a man who did not relish fighting did better to stay out of sight in the hills. In fact, this has even been called the chief

9. *The Negro in the New World*, pp. 196–197.
10. Thomas Madiou, *Histoire d'Haïti*, III, 24, 54.

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reason for which women assumed a larger part of the agricultural work than in the early days of the century: to keep their husbands indoors during the hours of daylight.

Haitian markets seemed to fascinate foreign visitors a hundred years ago as they do today. One Englishman, describing the markets at Cap-Haïtien and Gonaïves, said that riding one morning to market in the latter small town he passed 465 persons and all sorts of animals. "The women as usual were decently dressed; and the men were more respectable than any we had seen on our route: they were evidently small cultivators who live on their own freeholds. . . . All were cheerful and happy."[11]

Ever since force was withdrawn from the economic life of the Haitians—that is, since 1820—a steady round of criticism has been leveled at the "laziness" of the average male. Much of this can be discounted as coming from unsympathetic white foreigners who visited Haiti to find proof of Negro inferiority; some of it again is not significant, since it is the product of élite essayists who cherished the prepossession that the black was born to menial labor, and that if he did not work he had small reason for existence. The fact remains that not even friendly authors have been able to refrain from comment upon the inertia of the Haitian man, whether of the 1830's or, indeed, the present day. It is worth selecting half a dozen of the earlier criticisms, ranging from 1826 to 1860—two by Haitians, two by Englishmen, and two by Americans. Impressionistic, they nevertheless establish a basis from which to gauge the accuracy or inaccuracy of the charge.

In 1826, Placide Justin, drawing most of his material from the notes of the British agent in the Antilles, wrote: "The Haitian man is characterized by an almost unbelievable inertia. He is practically without ambition in political as well as in private life. No one seems to worry about tomorrow."[12] Two years later the Englishman, James Franklin, compared the régimes of Christophe in the North and of Pétion and Boyer in the South; with the former he was entirely sympathetic, but in 1828

> the state of ignorance prevailing among the people in the mountains and the interior parts is almost inconceivable. It appears as if the work of civilization had not commenced, and that the people had not taken one

11. John Candler, *Brief Notices of Hayti*, pp. 25, 26.
12. *Histoire politique et statistique de l'île d'Haïti*, p. 536.

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114 461 voluntary step towards improving themselves in any one thing. . . . Experiments may be tried, laws may be enacted, and encouragement given, but nothing short of coërcion and want will impel the Haytian to labour; and I have my doubts as to the practicability of enforcing labour in Hayti until the people have been better instructed, and their characters become changed. . . . Nature is too generous to the Haytian; he never wants, and so never works for hire, as do free labourers in other countries.[13]

An American, Dr. Jonathan Brown of Philadelphia, in 1837 published a volume which in most respects seems quite dispassionate. He says:

● [462] The females are compelled to perform most of the labor. Those of the country employ themselves in cultivating the soil, while the men spend their time in traversing the country on horseback, in drinking, smoking, and other habits equally unprofitable. The females of the town perform all the retail traffic of the country. . . . They derive a subsistence for themselves and for their families.[14]

175 241 208 178 Boyer's secretary of state, Inginac, tried by means of a pamphlet—which few Haitians could have read—to urge the peasants of 1840 to greater activity. He says that although coffee is the chief source of Haitian wealth, although every day small properties have been multiplied, although times are improving, yet the old routines are still followed in coffee cultivation, as if the men would never work and "as if the Haitians were not susceptible of making any progress in the sciences."[15]

114 461 In 1842 an English Quaker, John Candler, wrote that without a modicum of labor the peasants could not subsist at all; "but they do not, and they will not, work hard to please anybody, and hence agriculture languishes, and commerce is stationary."[16] Finally, in 1860, Benjamin Hunt, an American, remarked: "If one wants to be lazy, Hayti is the place. It is possible to get through the day with little annoyance from cold, hunger, or the police, and with the least possible amount of work."[17] Similar testimony could be greatly multiplied. It is only in recent years that any author has affirmed that

13. *The Present State of Hayti*, pp. 359–362.
14. *The History and Present Condition of St. Domingo*, II, 281.
15. Joseph Balthasar Inginac, "*Culture du caféier et préparation de la fève pour être livrée au commerce*" [a pamphlet], (Port-au-Prince, 1840), p. 1.
16. *Brief Notices of Hayti*, p. 38.
17. *Remarks on Hayti as a Place of Settlement for Afric-Americans*, p. 12.

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the men as well as the women work arduously. It seems justifiable to conclude that industry has not always been a characteristic of the Haitian male; and to ask why.

One valid reason is, of course, political. As we have seen, until the American Occupation Haiti was greatly overmilitarized. Almost every able-bodied male was at one time or another during his prime a soldier in the army. Since the bane of the country from 1804 to 1915 was its revolutions, there was room for a man to serve either in the regular army or, lured by future promises, in the guerrilla forces of a scheming general. To be drawn away from the land at the very moment of physical maturity was to predispose a youth against humdrum field work. As a soldier he traveled, knew excitement, was fed and clothed, and could loaf, except during battle. So schooled, upon retirement from the army a man was hardly disposed to settle down to steady labor. Even if as a young man he remained upon his farm, he might at any moment be called away to service, just when he was most needed for the crop. If Haiti was to be fed, the women, who alone were exempt from army service, provided the only available regular workers.

Tradition offers another explanation for masculine independence of hard work. The African background of female agricultural labor has been cited. In slavery the men had been degraded by being forced to do work of this sort, while the lot of women hardly differed from what it had been in the old country. Under Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, with their large armies, women, already numerically preponderant, formed the vast majority of field workers. Independent small farming hardly changed the picture. African tradition, moreover, made the man master of his property and wives, the rôle of woman being that of man's inferior and useful servant.

Disease is another partial explanation. Until recently no one seems to have been aware of the prevalence in Haiti of such diseases as hookworm, malaria, and tuberculosis which, without necessarily affecting a person outwardly, may nevertheless sap his vitality, leaving him listless and worn out by even slight exertion. Obviously much of what was called laziness was due to disease. But the flaw in this reasoning is that illness makes no discrimination between the sexes. If men were disease-ridden, so were women: yet the latter were steadily industrious.

Any foray into possible psychological reasons is guesswork. It

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Any foray into possible psychological reasons is guesswork. It might be hazarded that the men felt they had fought for freedom and so deserved to enjoy its benefits; or that agriculture smacked of the old days of slavery and should be avoided by the superior male; or that since ambition for progress was not a Haitian characteristic, and the work of women produced enough food, there was no reason to change a routine which did very well. One cannot speak with definiteness on these matters. And it was upper-class Haitians and foreigners who adjudged peasant men lazy; slaves and "forced" laborers always appear lazy to their masters.

In modern times at least, male peasants toil strenuously, although not so continuously as their females. The preparation of the ground for planting is hard work, and is done entirely by men. Harvesting, housebuilding, marketing the coffee (one form of marketing not beneath a man's dignity)—these are men's major contributions to economic life.

People who live in isolation commonly tend to slide back in such externalities as clothes, manners, neatness of person and of dwelling, speech, and social ritual. Almost from the very beginning of Haitian history, most of the people were effectively isolated from the rest of the world, so that the superficial aspects of daily life exhibited to all visitors the spectacle of retrogression.

Christophe, who had frequent English visitors in his kingdom, forced his subjects to dress neatly. After his time no ruler made regulations for dress. The men commonly wore a pair of cotton trousers and an abbreviated shirt, while women's dress was a loose-fitting garment which might be called a Mother Hubbard. Children could, and can now, be seen up to the age of four or five without any clothes at all. The nearer the countrypeople live to towns, where the example of the élite is before them, the better their dress is likely to be.

Slave cabins on the former plantations were inhabited by the free Haitians until decay set in and the cabins fell down. They were ordinarily superseded by huts which could be constructed of withes and thatch. The British Minister during the eighteen-twenties saw a man near Plaisance building his house, "plastering the wattling, of which the walls were composed, with a mixture of mud and ashes," using his hand as a trowel.[18] Almost never did a hut have more than

18. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, I, 150.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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Spring water in the country districts is frequently

polluted by all sorts of excreta; the watering of milk is a common practice, and samples of milk have been generally found to contain many times the normal amount of bacilli. The cases of tuberculosis are practically always complicated by malaria.

Dysentery, when caused by bacilli, is epidemic in nature. In Haiti this form, known as "colerin," annually affects about a quarter of the rural population. Another type, caused by a variety of amoeba, affects another ten or twenty per cent, according to the region. Enteritis is less serious than dysentery but just as prevalent, being caused by protozoa and intestinal worms. Poor diet, the abuse of alcohol, premature weaning, and unwise nursing are also responsible. Granular conjunctivitis affected sixteen per cent of the children examined by the Rockefeller Foundation.

Cancer seems to strike only a normal number of Haitians; goitre is common in the mountain districts; leprosy has become a menace in the West and South; elephantiasis is present, particularly in the South; gusarola (characterized by patches of skin assuming different color) is fairly common in the Cul-de-Sac plain; chicken pox, influenza, and meningitis epidemics are occasionally serious.

The health of the peasant women is seriously and continuously endangered by their mode of life and work. It is customary for females, from girlhood onward, to carry heavy burdens on their heads—over steep paths in the mountains, along rocky trails, up hill and down. The commonest sight in Haiti is to see a woman swinging along with a great load of fuel, a tin of water, a bundle of building material, a basket of fruit, on her head. Cranial bones are flattened, the spine is bent, internal organs are strained or damaged. For ill-nourished persons to carry heavy weights for long distances with little rest means undue pressure on the heart and lungs, and so an increasing tendency to cardiac and pulmonary infections as well as chronic anemia. Overwork frequently results in miscarriages.

As has been said, childbirth often occurs by the roadside, on the way to market, or in the market place. In no case can a peasant woman remain in bed for a proper period either before or after parturition. Midwives are untrained; they use primitive methods which inevitably result in defective development of infants, lessened resistance to disease, high infant mortality, and a prevalence of abdominal diseases in women. Pressure of work, whether in the field or on the way to market, makes a mother soon stop nursing her